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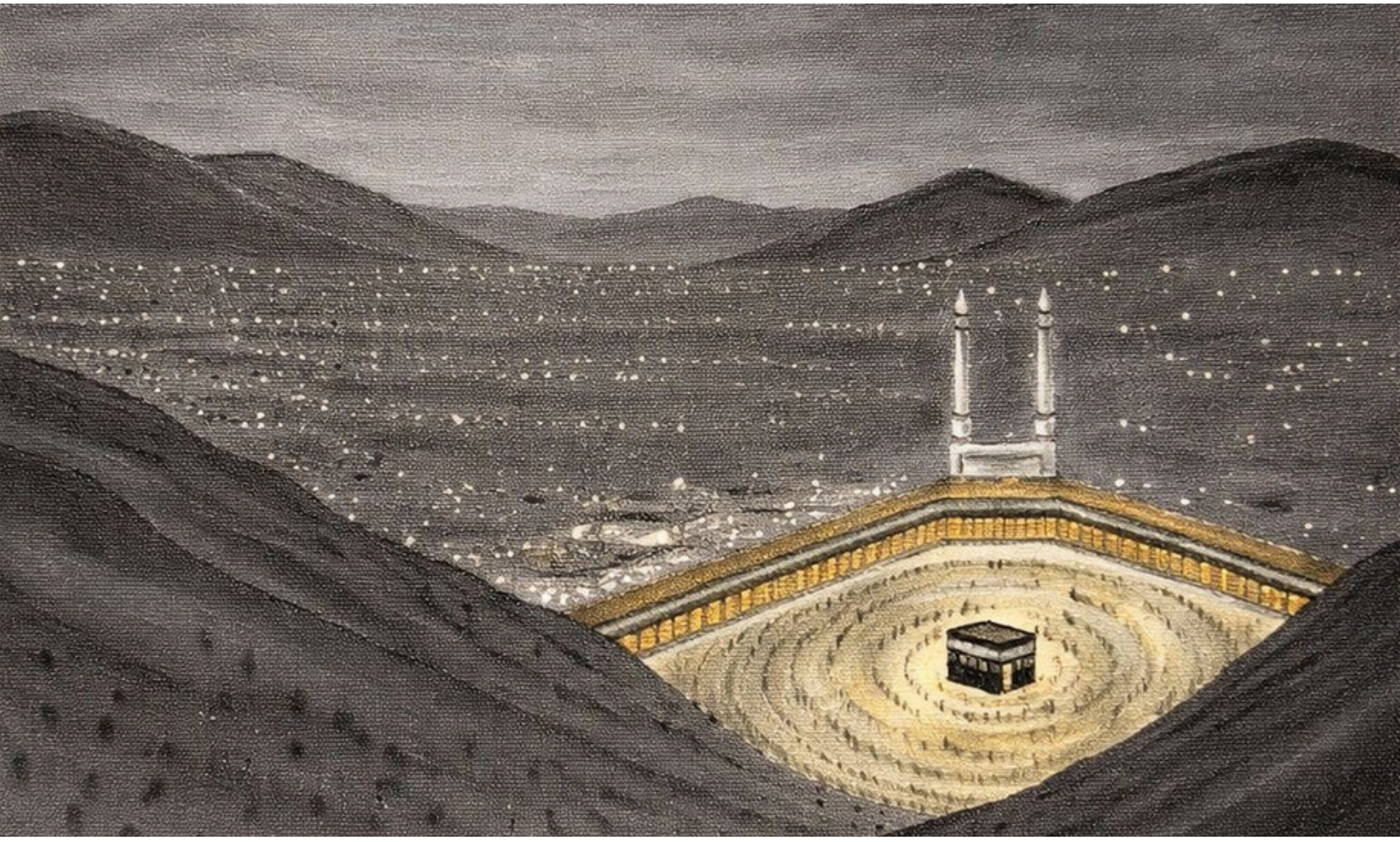
The Ten Days of
Dhul Hijjah



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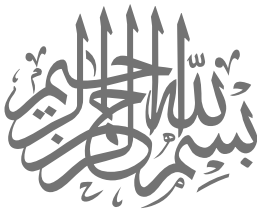

All praise is due to Allah; a praise befitting His Majesty. We praise Him for what He has taught, we thank Him for what He has bestowed, and we ask Him for success and steadfastness in both word and deed. We bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, without partner, and we bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

O Allah, send Your peace and blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, as You sent peace and blessings upon Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim; indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Majestic. O Allah, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, as You blessed Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim; indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Majestic.

To proceed:

It is from the expansive mercy of Allah toward His servants that He has placed within the journey of life **blessed stations**. In these moments, covenants are renewed, souls are recharged, and the heavy burdens that weigh upon the shoulders are wiped away.

In the midst of this fast-paced life, amidst the noise of the days and the crowding of preoccupations, a guest knocks at the door of the Muslim; a guest that visits but once a year.

It carries an opportunity that may never return and extends a hand with a priceless favor: **the season of the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah.** This is the season that Allah Almighty has designated as one of the greatest, most blessed, and most rewarding points in time.

The ten first days of Dhu al-Hijjah represent an arena where souls compete and hearts longing for their Creator race. Whoever finds themselves in these days with a present heart and high resolve, let them receive glad tidings of goodness! But for the one whom these days pass by while they are heedless, they have missed a bounty that cannot be compensated. These are the days of divine breezes; enough to completely alter the course of a person's life, should they approach them with sincerity and certainty.

The scholar Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his book, Lata'if al-Ma'arif:
"**The truly fortunate person is the one who seizes the seasons of the months, days, and hours, drawing closer to his Master therein through acts of obedience. Perhaps he may be touched by one of those divine breezes, attaining a happiness that grants him safety thereafter from the Fire and its scorching heat.**"
Hence, there is a desperate need for vigilance during these seasons; How deeply we need, in this day and age, to awaken for these seasons! We see how days and lives pass

us by, how the leaves of life drop away, and how bitter the regret is when it finally arrives too late...

The Virtue of the First Ten Days of Dhul-Hijjah

The excellence of these days was not established through personal reasoning or speculation. Rather, it came explicitly in the clear revelation of the Noble Qur'an, in several verses that magnify their status and elevate their rank.

Allah Almighty says:
{By the dawn, and by the ten nights} (Al-Fajr: 1–2).

Here we pause before a profound reality: Allah does not swear except by something great in significance. So when Allah swore by these ten nights, it was a clear indication of their greatness and lofty status.

Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both, said: "**The nights by which Allah swore are the first ten nights of Dhul-Hijjah.**" (Reported by Al-Bayhaqi in Shu'ab al-Iman, 3747). This is also the opinion held by the majority of Qur'anic commentators among both the early and later scholars.

Imam Al-Tabari, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "**The correct opinion according to us is that they are the ten days of Al-Adha, due to the consensus of the scholars of interpretation.**"

Ibn Kathir, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "**The ten nights refer to the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah, as stated by Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn Al-Zubayr, Mujahid, and many others among the early and later scholars.**"

Based on this, the days we are about to live through are the very days by which the Lord of the worlds swore an oath. This should compel every Muslim to honor them through righteous deeds and reverence. It is not befitting for them to pass like any other days of the year in heedlessness and distraction with matters that bring no benefit in the Hereafter.

Allah Almighty also says:
{And mention the name of Allāh on known [i.e., specific] days} (Al-Hajj: 28).

In this verse is a direct connection between time and remembrance of Allah, making them truly "the days of remembrance (Dhikr)."
The righteous predecessors, may Allah be pleased with them, translated this command into action by filling the marketplaces, mosques, and homes with takbir and praise of Allah. Imam Al-Bukhari mentioned in his Sahih (2/20):
"**Ibn 'Umar and Abu Hurayrah would go out to the marketplace during the ten days proclaiming takbir, and the people would proclaim takbir along with them."**

Then came the authentic Prophetic narrations confirming what the Qur'an had already indicated. When the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, spoke about the virtue of these days, he established a reality that should shake the heart, awaken determination, and drive one toward righteous action.

The Most Beloved Days to Allah

Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"**There are no days in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Allah than these days." They said, "Not even jihad?" He replied, "Not even jihad, except for a man who went out risking his life and wealth and returned with nothing.**" (Reported by Al-Bukhari, no. 969).

The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, asked specifically about jihad in the path of Allah. Jihad in Islam is among the greatest, most noble, and most rewarding of deeds. Yet the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said: "Not even jihad in the path of Allah." **Meaning that righteous deeds during the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah surpass, in reward and in Allah's love, even the greatest acts performed at other times.**

If a single humble prostration during these days can outweigh jihad in Allah's cause performed outside of them,

then how can we allow these days to slip away? How can a believer who knows this let the ten days pass without presenting something meaningful for himself before Allah?

Al-Hafiz Ibn Rajab, may Allah have mercy on him, derived from this hadith a principle of immense importance and deep impact. He said:

“**Since deeds during the ten days are better and more beloved to Allah than deeds performed during all other days of the year, then even lesser deeds done during them become superior to greater deeds done at other times. This is why the Companions asked: ‘Not even jihad in the path of Allah?’ and he replied: ‘Not even jihad,’ except for one specific type of jihad, which is the highest form of jihad**.”

He then mentioned that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, was once asked which form of jihad is best, and he answered:

“**The one whose mount is slaughtered and whose blood is spilled.**”

Meaning the one who sacrifices everything and is martyred in the cause of Allah.

Ibn Rajab continues:

“**This specific form of jihad alone surpasses deeds in the ten days. As for all other forms of jihad, then**

righteous deeds during the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah are better and more beloved to Allah than them, as is the case with all other deeds. This demonstrates that a lesser deed performed during a virtuous time can surpass a greater deed performed at another time because of the multiplied reward and virtue attached to it.” (Lata’if al-Ma‘arif, p. 452).

The Best Days of This World

Jabir ibn ‘Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: “**The best days of this world are the ten days.**” (Narrated by Al-Bazzar as mentioned in Majma‘ al-Zawa’id by Al-Haythami (4/20), and by Al-Shajari in Al-Amali (1687)).

The best days of this world. Not merely the best days of the month, nor the best days of a season, but the best days in the entirety of worldly life from beginning to end.

How many times in your life have these days passed by you? How many times did you truly seize them? And how many times did you neglect them only to regret it after they were gone?

A person spends his time, wealth, and effort on many matters that appear important and necessary. He stays awake through the night for worldly work, travels long

hours attending social gatherings. But where is that same determination when the best days of this world arrive? Do they not deserve from you at least as much time, effort, and attention as you give to far lesser matters?

The Secret of Their Superiority…
Why These Days in Particular?

One may wonder: why these specific days? What is it that made Allah favor them over all the other days of the year?

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “**The reason for the distinction of the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah is that the foundational acts of worship all come together within them: prayer, fasting, charity, and Hajj, and this does not occur at any other time.**” (Fath al-Bari 2/460).

These days are therefore the only time in the entire year in which the four practical pillars of Islam converge at once. Prayer is established throughout them, fasting is prescribed within them, charity is highly encouraged, and Hajj is performed during them. This unique gathering has no equal in any other season of the year, and it is what gives these days their extraordinary nature and multiplied reward.

There is another dimension to understanding this virtue, beautifully explained by Al-Hafiz Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, may Allah have mercy on him, who said:

“**Since Allah, Glorified and Exalted, has placed within the hearts of the believers a longing to behold His Sacred House, and not everyone is able to visit it every year, He obligated Hajj only once in a lifetime upon**

those who are able. Then He made the season of the ten days shared between those traveling and those remaining behind. So whoever is unable to perform Hajj in a given year is still able, during these ten days, to perform deeds in his home that are even better than jihad, and jihad is superior to Hajj." (Lata'if al-Ma'arif, p. 460).

So reflect, dear reader, upon this vast mercy. Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, knows that many believers yearn for His Sacred House yet are unable to reach it. He knows among them are the poor who cannot afford provisions or transportation; the sick who cannot endure travel; those weighed down by responsibilities and unable to find the time; and those living in distant lands for whom the journey is difficult. So Allah made these days a shared season, one that requires neither a travel ticket, nor financial means, nor physical strength. All it requires is sincere devotion to Allah and a heart filled with aspiration.

He, may Allah have mercy on him, also said: "**Your brothers in these days have entered into ihram, set out for the Sacred House, and filled the horizons with talbiyah, takbir, tahlil, tahmid, and glorification. They journeyed while we remained behind; they drew near while we stayed distant; they advanced while we lagged behind. Yet if we are granted a share with them, then we too shall attain felicity.**" (Lata'if al-Ma'arif, p. 461).

So to the one who could not perform Hajj this year, and to the one who gazes toward the Sacred House from afar with longing eyes and tears of yearning, these days are your opportunity to share in the reward and virtue. Increase in remembrance of Allah and devote yourself to worship. Perhaps Allah will count you among those whom He mentions and praises before His angels!

The Comparison Between the Two Blessed Tens

People often confuse the comparison between the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah and the last ten nights of Ramadan, and it is a matter that holds an important place in the books of Islamic scholarship. The scholars resolved this issue with a precise and beautiful distinction that reconciles the two without contradiction.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "**The days of the ten of Dhul-Hijjah are better than the days of the ten of Ramadan, while the last ten nights of Ramadan are better than the nights of the ten of Dhul-Hijjah.**"
Imam Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, further explained: "**If the intelligent and discerning person reflects upon this answer, he will find it sufficient and satisfying, for there are no days in which righteous deeds are more beloved to Allah than the days of the ten of Dhul-Hijjah, and among them are the Day of 'Arafah, the Day of Sacrifice, and the Day of Tarwiyah.**" (Majmu' al-Fatawa 25/287).

Then Al-Hafiz Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, may Allah have mercy on him, concluded: "**The entirety of these ten days is superior to the entirety of the ten of Ramadan, even**

though within the ten of Ramadan is a night unmatched by any other.” (Lata’if al-Ma‘arif, p. 355).

The Day of ‘Arafah…
The Greatest Moment of Divine Nearness

In this great season, there is a single day that deserves to be stopped at, reflected upon, and given the attention befitting its greatness. **It is the ninth day of Dhul-Hijjah, the Day of ‘Arafah,** the crown of the season and the jewel of the ten days. It is a day in which Allah chooses His servants, frees necks from the Fire, and boasts about them to the angels of the heavens. It is a day when supplications are answered with immense generosity, and hearts break before Allah as barriers between the servant and his Lord dissolve.

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

“**There is no day on which Allah frees more servants from the Fire than the Day of ‘Arafah. He draws near, then boasts about them to the angels, saying: What do these people seek?**” (Sahih Muslim, no. 1348)

Pause at this majestic divine scene. Allah, Glorified is He, the Lord of the great Throne, the Creator of the universe and its disposer, draws near on the Day of ‘Arafah and boasts about His servants to the angels. He boasts about them. What is it that makes them worthy of such honor? They are servants who have come from every distant path, dusty of feet, disheveled in appearance. They left behind their wealth, their families, and their lands, seeking nothing but the pleasure of Allah.

And you, in your home, at your work, or wherever you may be, when you turn to Allah on this day with remembrance, supplication, fasting, and humility, you are included, by the will of Allah, in this divine boasting.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, describing what occurs on this great day, said:
"**It is known that during the evening of 'Arafah, the pilgrims receive in their hearts of faith, mercy, light, and blessing what cannot be expressed in words.**" (Majmu' al-Fatawa 5/374).

Perhaps a large share of this extends to every Muslim who turns sincerely to Allah on this day with humility and devotion, wherever they may be.

Fasting on the Day of 'Arafah

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, was asked about fasting on the Day of 'Arafah, and he said:
"**I hope from Allah that it will expiate the sins of the previous year and the coming year.**" (Sahih Muslim, no. 1162)
Two full years of sins expiated by a single day of fasting!

The Mother of the Believers Aisha bint Abi Bakr, may Allah be pleased with her, said: "**There is no day of the year that I prefer to fast more than the Day of 'Arafah**."

If this was the eagerness of the Mother of the Believers, then where are we in comparison, she who lived with the Prophet, peace be upon him, and knew the virtue of this day so closely?

The Supplication of the Day of ‘Arafah

It is reported from the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, that the best supplication is the supplication of the Day of ‘Arafah. In al-Muwatta’, from Talhah ibn ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Kurayz, the Messenger of Allah said: **the best supplication is the supplication of the Day of ‘Arafah, and the best of what I and the prophets before me have said is: “There is no deity but Allah alone, without partner, to Him belongs the dominion and to Him belongs all praise, and He is over all things fully capable.**”

Al-Tirmidhi also narrated from ‘Amr ibn Shu‘ayb, from his father, from his grandfather, that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: **the best supplication is the supplication of the Day of ‘Arafah, and the best of what I and the prophets before me have said is: “There is no deity but Allah alone, without partner, to Him belongs the dominion and to Him belongs all praise, and He is over all things fully capable.**”

Imam Al-Nawawi, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

“**This day is the best day of the year, so one should exert himself in remembrance, supplication, and recitation of the Qur’an, and he should supplicate for himself, his parents, his relatives, his teachers, his companions, his friends, his loved ones, all those who have shown him kindness, and all Muslims. He must be extremely cautious not to fall short in any of that, for this day cannot be made up.**” (Al-Adhkar, p. 333)

This day cannot be made up. Many days pass and can be compensated for, but when the Day of ‘Arafah ends, it does not return. If it passes you while you are heedless, it will not return except after a full year, if you are even granted the chance to reach it again.

Righteous Deeds...
What Should You Do in These Days?

One may ask: what is prescribed to strive for during these blessed days? The answer is that every righteous deed in these days has multiplied reward and is beloved to Allah. However, there are specific acts that have been especially emphasized and encouraged.

First: Remembrance of Allah (takbir, tahlil, and tahmid)

This is the most prominent symbol of these days and their greatest adornment. The righteous predecessors, may Allah have mercy on them, would fill the horizons with takbir during these days, to the point that Maymun ibn Mihran, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

"**I witnessed people, and they would make takbir during the ten days until it sounded like waves due to its abundance.**" (Fath al-Bari by Ibn Rajab 6/112)

Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

"**The best in the days of the ten of Dhul-Hijjah is to increase in acts of worship, especially takbir, tahlil, and tahmid. This is better than non-obligatory jihad.**" (Madarij al-Salikin 1/110)

Therefore, takbir should accompany you in these days at all times and in every place.

Among the supplications reported for this day is what

Al-Tirmidhi narrated from Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, would frequently make supplication during the evening of ʻArafah at the standing place, saying:

"**O Allah, to You belongs all praise as we say, and better than what we say. O Allah, to You is my prayer, my sacrifice, my life, and my death, and to You is my return, and to You, my Lord, is my inheritance. O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the punishment of the grave, the whisperings of the chest, and the scattering of affairs. O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the evil that the wind brings.**"

Second: Fasting

It is recommended to fast all nine days of Dhul-Hijjah, especially the Day of ʻArafah, whose virtue has already been mentioned.

Imam Al-Nawawi, may Allah have mercy on him, said in Al-Majmuʻ (6/428), one of the Shafiʻi works:

"**As for the ruling, Al-Shafiʻi and his companions said: it is recommended to fast the Day of ʻArafah for those who are not performing Hajj.**"

Ibn Qudamah, may Allah have mercy on him, said in Al-Mughni (4/443), one of the Hanbali works:

"**It is a noble and great day, an honorable Eid, and its virtue is immense. It has been authentically reported from the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him,**

that fasting it expiates two years.”

Ibn Muflih, may Allah have mercy on him, said in Al-Furu‘ (3/108), also from Hanbali works:

“**It is recommended to fast the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah, and the most emphasized of them is the ninth, which is the Day of ‘Arafah, by scholarly consensus.**”

Third: Standing in night prayer

Among the great deeds of these days is standing in prayer during their nights. Sa‘id ibn Jubayr, may Allah have mercy on him, when the ten days began, would exert himself in worship to an extreme degree, almost beyond his capacity. He said: “**Do not extinguish your lamps during the nights of the ten days, out of love for worship.**” (Lata’if al-Ma‘arif, p. 354).

Fourth: Charity and fulfilling the needs of Muslims

One of the most often neglected aspects of this season is that kindness to people is among the greatest deeds. Righteous action in these days is not limited to ritual worship, but includes every act of goodness through which you bring happiness to a heart, relieve a hardship, or bring comfort to a sorrowful soul.

Visit a distant relative. Ask about a sick neighbor. Spend what you are able from your wealth in the path of Allah. All of this is righteous action, and Allah multiplies its reward in these blessed days.

Fifth: Repentance and turning to Allah

The greatest thing a servant can offer in these days is to return to Allah with a sincere heart, humbled before Him, repenting from every sin, and hoping for His mercy and generosity. Repentance in these days has an indescribable effect on the heart. Many people have turned to Allah in one season and come out completely changed, their state transformed, their intention renewed, carried on the wings of hope. Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

"**Glad tidings to the one who turns to Allah, for Allah turns to him. When Allah turns to a servant, his directions are illuminated, his horizons are brightened, and his darkness is removed.**" (Tariq al-Hijratayn, p. 648)

Is there any moment more fitting for this turning to Allah than these great days?

Sixth: The Day of Sacrifice… the conclusion of the season and the peak of gratitude

The conclusion of these blessed days is the Day of Sacrifice, the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah, which the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, singled out for absolute virtue, saying: "**The greatest day with Allah, Blessed and Exalted, is the Day of Sacrifice, then the Day of Rest.**" (Narrated by Ahmad and Abu Dawud).

On the Day of Sacrifice, great acts of worship come together: prayer, sacrifice, takbir, remembrance of Allah, and joy in His blessings.

The Great Gain… The Great Opportunity!

O hearts that seek Allah amid the noise of life, these days are once again knocking at your doors. Do not waste them. Do not say, “I will act in the last minute.” Do not say, “I still have time.” For days are faster than we assume and shorter than our hopes.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Rajab, may Allah have mercy on him, said in words that move the still heart and awaken the sleeping soul:

“**The great gain, the great gain, in seizing the opportunity in these magnificent days, for there is no replacement for them and no equal in value. Hasten, hasten to righteous deeds, and rush, rush before the arrival of death, before the regret of the negligent over what he has done, before he asks to return so he may do righteous deeds but is not answered, before death comes between the hopeful and his hopes, before a person becomes held in his grave by what he has sent forth of deeds.**” (Lata’if al-Ma‘arif, p. 462).

Then he concluded with calls that address every person according to his age and condition:

O you whose gray hair has appeared after reaching forty!

O you who have passed ten years after that until reaching fifty!

O you who are in the battlefield of death between sixty and seventy!

What are you waiting for after this message except certainty to arrive?

He also said, may Allah have mercy on him:

“**Expose yourself to the breezes of your Lord in these ten days, for within them are divine breezes by which Allah reaches whom He wills. Whoever is reached by them is blessed for the rest of his life.**”

So, whoever reads these words, turn to your Lord in these days with sincerity, truthfulness, and humility. Your deeds do not need to be large or visible. It is enough that they are sincere for Allah and come from a heart that seeks Him. Allah is Generous; He accepts little and multiplies it greatly, and He does not waste even the weight of a particle of good.

Perhaps a single prostration in the stillness of the night, a sincere supplication on the Day of Arafah, or a single remembrance of Allah could be the cause of your happiness in this life and the next.

O Allah, allow us to reach the ten days of Dhul-Hijjah, help us to make the most of them, accept from us our righteous deeds, and have mercy on us with Your vast mercy, O Most Merciful of those who show mercy. And all praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Al-Qasīf | 26 Dhul-Qi’dah 1447 AH.

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